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## Viewing cable 10BOGOTA97, International Donors Signal Future Support for Consolidation

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Reference ID	Created	Released	Classification	Origin
<a href="#">10BOGOTA97</a>	<a href="#">2010-01-27 19:36</a>	<a href="#">2011-08-30 01:44</a>	<a href="#">CONFIDENTIAL</a>	<a href="#">Embassy Bogota</a>

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SUBJECT: International Donors Signal Future Support for Consolidation of Security Gains

REF: BOGOTA 186

CLASSIFIED BY: Mark Wells, Political Counselor; REASON: 1.4(B), (D)

#### Summary

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11. (C) On January 19, the Embassy's Colombia Strategic Development Initiative (CSDI) working group hosted officials from the Dutch, German and Canadian Embassies to discuss CSDI, Colombia's National Consolidation Plan (PNC) and the status of support from those Embassies for the PNC. The chief concerns expressed by donors were perceptions of a lack of GOC leadership and home government and NGO fears that consolidation is militarized. Despite this, the Dutch Embassy continues to support the model and has won the support of its MFA and NGO Pax Christi. The German Embassy supports the PNC but needs to convince a reluctant Berlin. The Canadians are split, with the Canadian Development Agency (CDA) reluctant but the MFA willing to engage, albeit with concern about the GOC's commitment to the PNC. Overall, these officials sent positive signals about future work in consolidation zones, reserving concerns mostly to implementation. End Summary.

#### CSDI Working Group Engages International Donors

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12. (C) In an effort to encourage other governments that have already committed some resources to the PNC, the CSDI working group invited the Dutch, German, and Canadian embassies to share experiences in helping the GOC to implement the PNC's whole-of-government approach on January 19. Pushback from NGOs and home governments has made international donors reluctant to support the PNC due to concerns about its reputed military emphasis. Foreign embassy officials explained their views on the Colombian Government's (GOC) PNC and described where their governments stand in supporting it.

#### Donors' Chief Concerns: Lack of GOC

#### Leadership and Fears of Militarization

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13. (C) No one questioned the overall whole-of-government concept or the merits of the PNC. The embassy officials seemed convinced that the PNC model of concentrating resources into the most troubled areas is the correct solution to help Colombia finish its transition from near-failed state to stable democracy. However, all agreed that the situation was precarious unless improvements in implementation are made. On GOC leadership, the head of the CDA said that Accion Social -- the lead civilian agency for the PNC -- was "showing all its warts" through its guidance of the consolidation process. The senior official of the Dutch Development Corporation said that although Accion Social was not suited for a leadership role, there was no alternative and it was necessary to continue encouraging it. The Canadian Political Counselor expressed concern about key personnel being stretched thin, given that PNC leaders all had "day jobs." She offered support to keep the political pressure on the GOC to improve the situation, complaining that Accion Social had failed to strategically engage donor embassies ever since consolidation

became state policy through Presidential Decree 001 of 2009. The CSDI working group told the donors about Post's engagement plan to focus GOC leadership on consolidation and press for needed structural reforms.

14. (C) On fears that the PNC is militarized, the CSDI working group shared that one of the key lessons learned from Plan Colombia is that security is a necessary prerequisite for other interventions, otherwise development is unsustainable and ends up benefitting illegal armed groups (IAGs). Consequently, the initial phases of consolidation have appeared militarized to outsiders as the armed forces secure territory, and civilian agencies and the police lag behind security advances. Additionally, GOC outreach has been wanting - the GOC has done a poor job of explaining the PNC and its emphasis on establishing civilian institutions, rule-of-law and socio-economic development. The CSDI working group offered donors further engagement (e.g., site visits) to demonstrate the PNC's civilian aspects and progress, in order to help dispel false perceptions of militarization.

Dutch Fully On-Board, Moving to Next Phase

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15. (C) Despite the above challenges, the Dutch continue to believe in the PNC concept and are focused on implementation. They are unlikely to be involved on a national level and choose to focus on the Plan for the Integrated Consolidation of the Macarena (PCIM), as there is enough work for them there and significant but manageable challenges require further attention. They are in discussions with their MFA and have convinced their Minister to move onto the second phase of support which would mean more funds, more political attention and more years of involvement in the PCIM. One of their goals is to broaden their assistance from food security and income generation to land issues, civil society/NGO strengthening and private sector economic development.

16. (C) The Dutch are active in recruiting partners and socializing the PNC concept. They have helped convince the NGO Pax Christi to support the PCIM which, according to Dutch officers, is a key victory because Pax Christi is their lead NGO in Colombia and others will follow its lead. They are also working to convince local NGOs to take a second look at consolidation, including the thinktank Corporacion Nuevo Arco Iris (CNAI). The Dutch also want to increase the human rights focus in the PNC and have approached the UN about a possible role in this regard.

German Embassy Lobbying Home Government on PNC's Merits

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17. (C) The German chief of development said the German Embassy is convinced that the PCIM model is the best solution in Colombia. However, Berlin has a different view and is being pressured by NGOs and interest groups about the PNC's perceived militarization. The German Embassy is working on three levels of support to the PNC. The Embassy will move forward on microprojects with a maximum cost of 10-15 thousand euros. Although small, these will provide a positive political signal. Secondly, the German Embassy will try to convince its MFA to release MFA-controlled funds for food security and alternative development totaling 500,000 euros per year. The final level of assistance is controlled by the Ministry of Economic Cooperation, which according to the German official would be a challenge since it has a different perception of Colombia. A positive decision would mean a 3-6 year project in the 3-6 million euro range. As part of their lobbying, the Germans

will be receiving a delegation later this year to show them the Colombian context and risks and rewards of commitment. Another issue for the Germans is the security of their experts in the field.

#### Canadians Split on PNC

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18. (C) The Canadian Head of Aid said that with its \$25 million budget, the CDA is only concerned with short-term results in Colombia focused on vulnerable populations and thus does not have the "strategic responsibility" to ensure the stability of the Colombian state. The CDA is reluctant to directly support the GOC and thus link its assistance to security and stability. The official conceded that CDA should view its efforts in a "do no harm" principle and should try not to indirectly support IAGs, adding that his government was not neutral but wholly supported the Colombian state. The CDA official said Canada has not made a decision on the PNC, but in rare direct support to the GOC, is planning to give the National Learning Service (SENA) \$1 million per year. The official believes this will have a strategic link with the PNC based on education, a sector which has been largely ignored as a focus area in consolidation thus far.

19. (C) The Canadian Political Counselor said that a Minister has made a public statement in support of the PNC, and though it was just a statement, there are no indications that the Canadian government does not stand behind it. The officer said that her political section could access some funds (\$5 million a year) that could be available from the MFA's Global Peace and Security fund. It would be a MFA decision and the MFA does not have the same concerns about the PNC as does the CDA. The PNC resonates with the mandate of the fund -- stability and reconstruction -- and the fund has been used in Afghanistan, Haiti, Uganda, and Sudan. It would be low-profile support and complement CDA efforts but with different objectives. Possible support includes working along the border with Ecuador or building capacity with the Prosecutor General (Fiscalia) or Inspector General (Procuraduria). Canada also has new regional funds (\$15 million per year) for anti-crime capacity building, although Colombia would have to compete with other nations. The officer's primary concern is that the GOC appears not to have fully bought into its own plan and is thus hesitant to push for the funds.

#### GOC Makes Strides Towards Progress

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110. (C) Coincidentally, the GOC made some strides towards addressing the donors' criticisms later the same day at a periodic coordination meeting of the Center for the Coordination of Integrated Action (CCAI). Participants raised the issue of lingering perception that the consolidation plan is military-led, as well as the need to deepen outreach. Diego Molano, head of Accion Social and PNC lead, said he was seeking a date in the first two weeks of February to hold a PNC discussion with donors. Also, a representative from the National Planning Department (DNP) described a GOC interagency exercise to identify the entirety of government projects and programming in consolidation zones to better understand and manage them. In addition, Molano approved Accion Social's strategic objectives for 2010, with elements specifically targeting consolidation zones including dedicated food security and income generation program budgets, incorporating 19,000 new families into a voluntary eradication assistance program, and five new land restitution projects.

Comment

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¶11. (C) Donors' concerns about the PNC echo our own, but like us, donors believe the challenges are not insurmountable and sent positive signals about future work in consolidation zones. The actions taken by Accion Social later in the day demonstrate that it is determined to improve implementation and channel the resources within its control towards the PNC, though much work remains. If Post and GOC engagement lead to more donors' (such as the Dutch and Germans) and NGOs' (such as Pax Christi) endorsement, inaccurate perceptions that the PNC is militarized should be mitigated. The Canadians, though reluctant, left a window open for engagement and whether or not they openly support the PNC in the end, the CDA's programs will indirectly contribute to social development and consolidation in CSDI zones. End Comment.  
BROWNFIELD